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ABSTRACT

This report presents an analysis of a survey of opinions concerning seven publications of the Office of Child Development (OCD). Questionnaires were sent to groups of individuals on OCD mailing lists and on mailing lists of independent agencies which sent out early childhood literature. Respondents were asked to judge the materials as to ease of reading and relevance to their needs. They also reported which publications they had read and how completely they had read them. Results generally indicated that recipients of the publications had a high regard for them and used them in planning, administering, and operating day care centers. (DP)

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SUMMARY REPORT

USER SURVEY OF DAY CARE PUBLICATIONS

DECEMBER 1973

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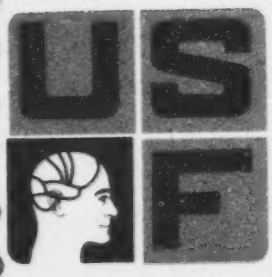

University Sciences Forum

ED 092253

SUMMARY REPORT

USER SURVEY OF DAY CARE PUBLICATIONS

USEFULNESS, RELEVANCY, AND TIMELINESS OF CERTAIN OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT PUBLICATIONS

Report Under
Grant Number OCD-CB-466

Prepared for
Office of Child Development
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
December 1973

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The conclusions and recommendations in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare or any other agency of governemnt.

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REPORT ON USERS SURVEY OF OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT PUBLICATIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

This report is an analysis of an opinion survey of Office of Child Development (OCD) publications of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The survey questionnaire was prepared by OCD and all other functions were carried out by the University Sciences Forum, a national public concern non-profit organization.

II. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this survey was to determine usage and relevance of seven day care publications. These are:

A Statement of Principles
Serving Infants
Serving School Age Children
Staff Training
Health Services
Administration
Serving Children with Special Needs

As indicated by the titles, these publications cover the general functional areas of organization, administration, staffing and operating child care centers. The questionnaire provided for evaluation of these publication on the basis of whether the publication was received by the respondent; how much of the publication was read (all to none in five stages); relevance; readability; referability; and loan factors of the publications. Additionally, the survey incorporated questions regarding usefulness of the publications and further requirements for information. The questionnaire provided for recording of the respondent's job or position within the overall child care program.

III. METHODOLOGY

Selection of Respondents: Three (3) one-time mailings were made to the following groups:

Group A — Size 556
Mailing lists provided by OCD

Group B — Size 562
List prepared from member purchase orders to Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Feb-Mar '73, for reprint copies (at cost) of Day Care Publications.

Group C — Size 1,421
List prepared from incoming correspondence files of OCD, requesting one or more day care publications.

It is significant that Groups A and C received their OCD publications without cost, whereas Group B purchased reprints from the Council.

Mailing and Receipt: The survey questionnaires (attachment 1) were mailed to prospective respondents over a 45-day period. Redundancy was avoided by repeated screening of the mailing lists. A total of 2,539 questionnaires were dispatched, to which 898 replies were received. This represents a 35.4% response, which is quite high for a national survey of any type.

Questionnaires received were key-punched into a record card. A computer program was prepared which read-out each record, provided descriptive summaries of each question, and detailed accounting for the question (#3) which dealt with receipt, use, and relevance of the OCD publications. Because of the open-endedness of several of the questions, they were subjected to manual synthesis and incorporated into the analysis. Due to the large number of answers received, a major part of the statistical analysis was concerned with classifying the opinions of the respondents concerning the issues treated in the questionnaire. The analysis was the work of four highly qualified University Sciences Forum members with backgrounds in statistical analysis. Detailed analysis data, including a narrative and table(s) for all usable data, have been submitted to the Office of Child Development. The following is a summary report.

IV. FINDINGS

A. Distribution and Returns

A summary of the distribution and returns of the questionnaires is contained in Table 1. It is interesting to note that the highest response rate, 37%, came from Group "B" (those who paid for reprints of these publications).

Group Source	Received Publications	Received No Publications	Total No. Mailed	Number Returned	% of Return
A	105	77	556	182	33
B	136	73	562	209	37
C	234	273	1,421	507	36

Table 1
Distribution and Returns

Respondents listed 82 separate job titles, with the largest numbers (frequency) coming from those who stated the following as their job functions (ranked):

Policy Maker
Staff Member
Director
Consultant
Administrator

Based on respondent specific job titles, these were also grouped by job title for possible further analysis.

Group 1 Teacher/Trainer
Group 2 Operator/Practitioner
Group 3 Administrator/Policy Maker

B. Are OCD Publications Read by Respondents?

The answer is a strong affirmative (96.1%). Respondents indicated 82 separate job descriptors. With further analysis, these fall into three broad categories: teachers, operators, and administrators. Of these categroies, teachers read a slightly higher percentage of the publications than administrators, and operators read slightly less than administrators. Table 2 is a summary of the averages:

C. What Publications Do the Various Groups Read?

The average respondent reads about 50% of the entire publication, and tends to select portions of highest personal interest on which to concentrate. Chart 1 compares the reading of the various publications by the three "mailing" groups. Much can be inferred from this table concerning the "needs" of certain disciplines when combined with comparative data on relevance and readability.

D. Are OCD Publications Easy To Read?

Almost 95% of the respondents felt that Day Care publications are most readable. Less than one percent thought OCD publications "difficult to read."

Discipline	Read One or More	Received-- Not Read
Teacher/Trainer (n = 74)	97.3%	2.7%
Operator/Practitioner (n = 68)	95.6%	4.4%
Administrator/Policy Maker (n = 296)	96.6%	3.4%

Table 2
Respondents Reading Record

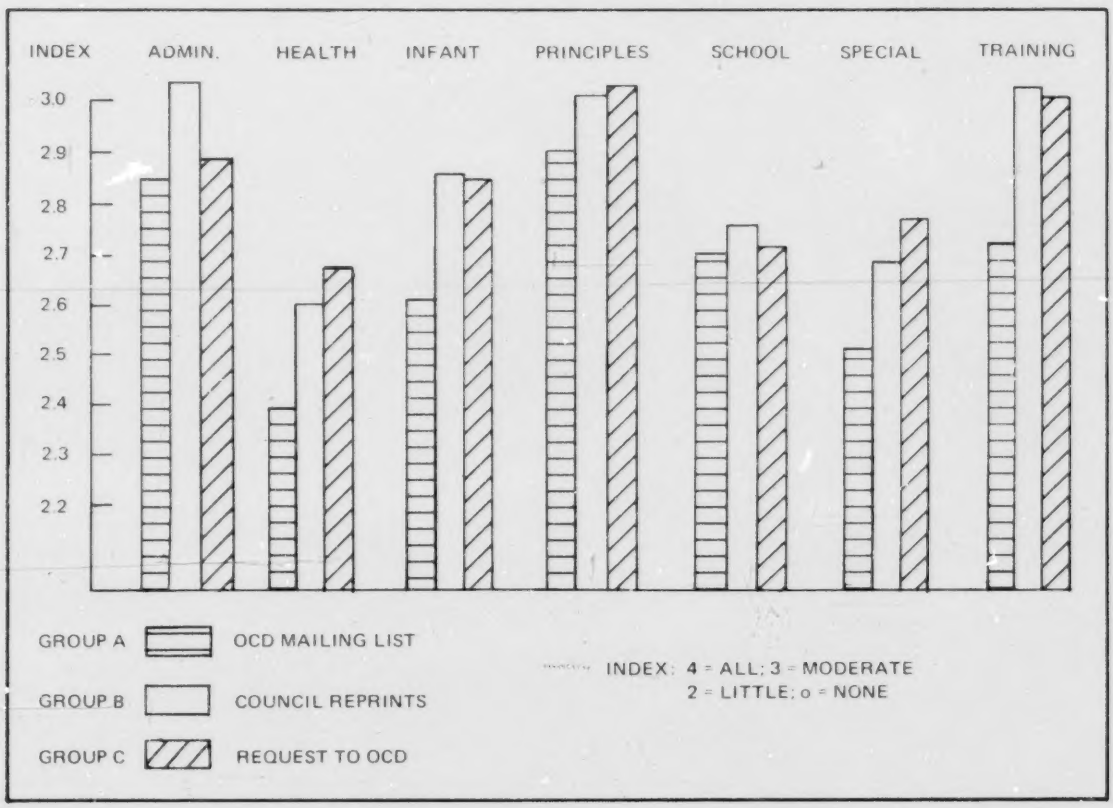

Chart 1
Amount Read

E. Are Day Care Publications Considered Relevant, and How Much of Each Publication Was Read by Respondents?

To answer these questions, one must examine the amount each publication was read as well as the degree of relevance assigned the publication. In the following, each publication is analyzed with respect to the reported amount read and the degree of relevance. Chart 1, Amount Read, indicates the degree to which a single publication is read by mailing groups. Group "B" respondents consistently read more of each publication (with two minor exceptions) than did any other group. Also, "Administration", "Principles" and "Training" are rated higher than any other publications.

Chart 2 displays the relevance data for each publication by "mailing" groups. On the average, Group "C" (those who initiated requests to OCD) tended to rate all publications more relevant to their use than did the other groups.

F. Administration

Of the seven publications surveyed this was ranked highest for relevance and second highest for amount read. There was little difference in the percentage return between the group receiving the publication free and the group purchasing reprints. There were, however, clear differences in the substantive responses among the groups. Those who purchased reprints read more and found the contents more relevant. Interestingly, those who paid for the publications also reported loaning them less often. (See Table 3)

G. Health

Among the publication in the survey, this one was ranked low for both relevance and amount read by recipients. Still, by any standards, it is judged to be moderately relevant, with a score of about 2.0 for the relevance index, and more than half of each

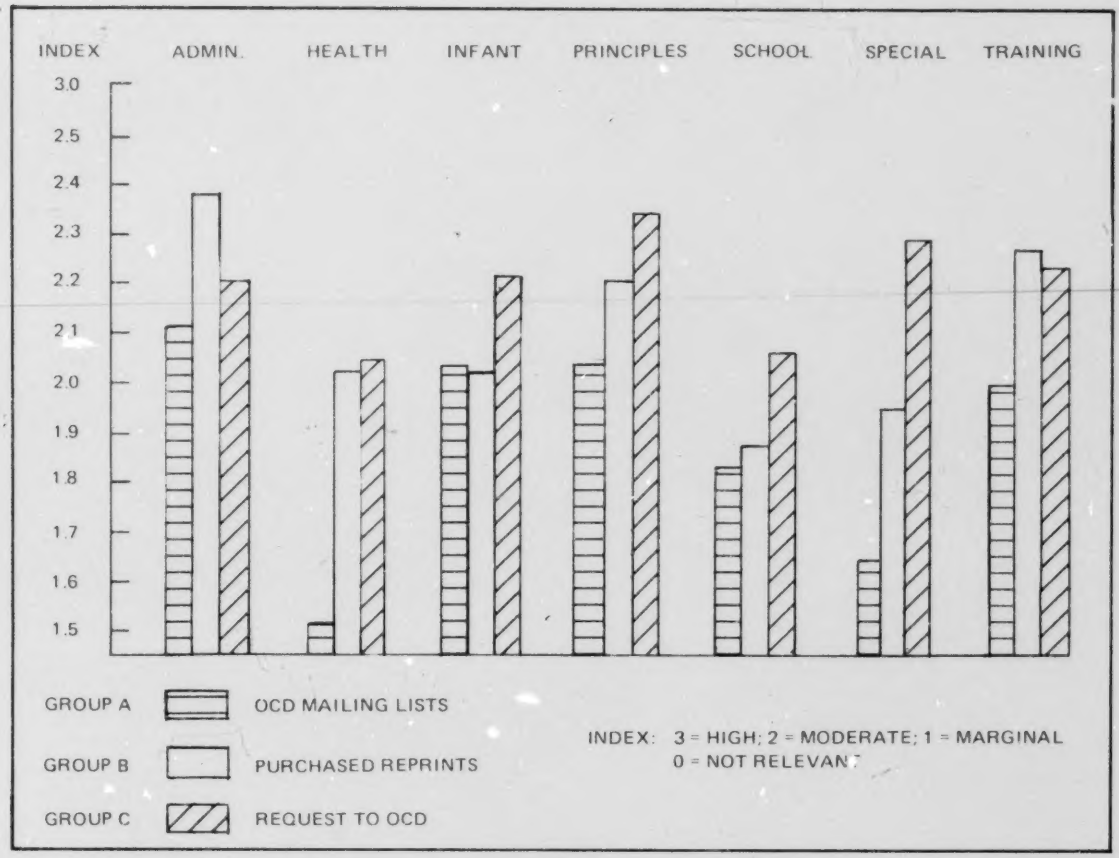

Chart 2
Relevance

issue is read by recipients. Again, those who purchased the publication reported that they read more of each issue and tended to assign higher relevance scores. (See Table 4)

H. Serving Infants

This publication was in a middle ranking for relevance and amount read. It was rated more than moderately relevant to the needs of recipients and most of each issue is read by them (a typical score of 2.8 for the amount read index). This publication is loaned more than others in the survey. (See Table 5)

I. Principles

This publication ranks first in terms of the amount amount of each issue read by recipients and ranks second in terms of relevance among the publications included in the survey. In this case there were no significant differences found between readers who purchased reprints and those who received the publication free: both groups read most of each issue and find it more than moderately relevant to their work. Again, persons who purchase do not lend the publication quite as much, but the difference is not statistically significant. (See Table 6)

J. School

This publication was ranked low compared to others surveyed, both for relevance to the needs of recipients and for the amount of each issue which is read. Still, more than half of each issue is read and found to be of more than marginal relevance. In this case, those who purchased publications found them less relevant than some who did not, but they reported reading more of each issue. (See Table 7)

	Group A n = 76	Group B n = 107	Group C n = 182
Amount Read			
All	47.2%	54.6%	50.7%
Most	18.4	12.0	13.5
Half	14.9	19.7	16.7
Little	11.5	9.4	14.0
None	8.0	4.3	5.1
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Amount Index (4 point scale) (4 points for all, 3 for most, etc.)	2.851	3.034	2.895
Relevance			
High	60.0%	64.9%	53.0%
Moderate	10.0	19.3	28.7
Marginal	11.2	6.1	5.6
Not Relevant	18.8	9.7	12.7
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Relevance Index (3 points for high, 2 for moderate, etc.)	2.113	2.395	2.221
Loans Reported	56.3%	47.8%	59.4%

Table 3
Administration

	Group A n = 93	Group B n = 94	Group C n = 184
Amount Read			
All	40.4%	48.5%	45.3%
Most	18.2	10.5	18.4
Half	17.2	22.6	16.8
Little	10.1	14.0	15.8
None	14.1	4.4	3.7
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Amount Index (4 point scale) (4 points for all, 3 for most, etc.)	2.606	2.853	2.858
Relevance			
High	35.6%	41.1%	44.4%
Moderate	25.3	33.9	32.2
Marginal	16.1	13.4	8.9
Not Relevant	23.0	11.6	14.5
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Relevance Index (3 point scale) (3 points for high, 2 for moderate, etc.)	1.506	2.045	2.067
Loans Reported	46.0%	42.0%	59.6%

Table 5
Infant

	Group A n = 93	Group B n = 94	Group C n = 184
Amount Read			
All	32.3%	42.4%	38.5%
Most	15.6	9.3	16.6
Half	19.8	22.9	20.9
Little	22.9	16.1	19.8
None	9.4	9.3	4.2
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Amount Index (4 point scale) (4 points for all, 3 for most, etc.)	2.385	2.593	2.652
Relevance			
High	35.6%	41.1%	44.4%
Moderate	25.3	33.9	32.2
Marginal	16.1	13.4	8.9
Not Relevant	23.0	11.6	14.5
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Relevance Index (3 point scale) (3 points for high, 2 for moderate, etc.)	1.506	2.045	2.067
Loans Reported	46.0%	42.0%	59.6%

Table 4
Health

	Group A n = 97	Group B n = 133	Group C n = 221
Amount Read			
All	51.0%	60.3%	55.2%
Most	13.5	11.9	14.9
Half	16.7	15.9	16.4
Little	9.4	6.3	8.5
None	9.4	5.6	5.0
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Amount Index (4 point scale) (4 points for all, 3 for most, etc.)	2.875	3.000	3.070
Relevance			
High	46.5%	49.6%	55.9%
Moderate	29.1	32.5	29.3
Marginal	5.8	5.7	5.2
Not Relevant	18.6	12.2	9.6
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Relevance Index (3 point scale) (3 points for all, 2 for most, etc.)	2.035	2.195	2.314
Loans Reported	53.4%	53.1%	60.0%

Table 6
Principles

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	Group A n = 88	Group B n = 95	Group C n = 175
Amount Read			
All	41.6%	43.2%	37.3%
Most	19.1	16.8	19.8
Half	15.7	18.9	22.0
Little	13.5	13.7	17.0
None	10.1	7.4	3.9
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Amount Index (4 point scale) (4 points for all 3 for most, etc.)	2.685	2.747	2.698
Relevance			
High	32.9%	42.9%	55.4%
Moderate	27.4	23.8	25.0
Marginal	13.7	17.9	9.2
Not Relevant	26.0	15.4	10.4
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Relevance Index (3 point scale) (3 points for high, 2 for moderate, etc.)	1.671	1.940	2.246
Loans Reported	50.6%	38.8%	55.8%

Table 7
School

	Group A n = 79	Group B n = 86	Group C n = 166
Amount Read			
All	34.5%	42.2%	44.6%
Most	20.2	13.7	14.3
Half	15.5	18.6	19.6
Little	20.2	17.6	17.9
None	9.6	7.9	3.6
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Amount Index (4 points for all, 3 for most, etc.)	2.500	2.647	2.786
Relevance			
High	32.9%	42.9%	55.4%
Moderate	27.4	23.8	25.0
Marginal	13.7	17.9	9.2
Not Relevant	26.0	15.4	10.4
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Relevance Index (3 points for high, 2 for moderate, etc.)	1.671	1.940	2.246
Loans Reported	50.6%	38.8%	55.8%

Table 8
Special Needs

K. Special Needs

This publication is ranked with the middle group of publications surveyed in terms of relevance to the needs of recipients; it is ranked with the low group in terms of the amount of each issue read by recipients. There are no significant differences in amount and relevance scores assigned between those who purchased the publication and those who did not. (See Table 8)

L. Training

This publication ranks high in terms of the amount of each issue read; virtually all of each issue is read by recipients. The material is assigned a rating of moderate relevance or better. Interestingly, recipients report that they lend this publication less often than any of the others in the survey. (See Table 9)

M. Use of Publications

Respondents were asked to identify various uses to which they put individual publications. Summing all publications, 52% of respondents used them as resource or reference material; 16% used them for planning of new centers; 12% found them useful for staff training; and 10% got "ideas" from them. Chart 3 depicts use of received publications by function.

N. Requirements for Materials

The questionnaires asked, in open-ended form, what further type of materials or publications were needed by respondents in their work. Of those who answered this question, twenty percent stated, "Booklet 3: *Preschool* (unpublished). It would appear that not only are many respondents "waiting" for this publication, but they feel a genuine need for same.

	Group A n = 99	Group B n = 104	Group C n = 199
Amount Read			
All	40.2%	50.8%	48.2%
Most	20.6	16.9	17.1
Half	19.6	21.2	22.6
Little	11.3	6.8	8.5
None	8.3	3.6	4.3
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Amount Index (4 point scale) (4 points for all, 3 for most, etc.)	2.732	3.034	2.990
Relevance			
High	45.6%	51.3%	49.5%
Moderate	26.7	29.1	30.2
Marginal	8.9	10.2	10.4
Not Relevant	18.8	9.4	9.9
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Relevance Index (3 point scale) (3 points for high, 2 for moderate, etc.)	1.989	2.222	2.193
Loans Reported	47.8%	38.9%	60.4%

Table 9
Training

Other responses included:

"How does one obtain information on parental involvement?"

"Where do I get structured cirriculum data?"

"How do I learn about sources for funding and better ways to manage centers?"

"Can you furnish me graphic aids such as 35mm slides and posters?"

"Can you furnish me a manual on day care?"

At the end of the scale, several respondents felt that a film on a "model center" would be most useful for them in providing the optimal care to their concerns. Chart 4 shows responses (in percent) to questions concerning further requirements for publications and depicts their priorities for additional materials.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Personnel of the University Sciences Forum have conducted and analyzed a number of surveys. Our experience confirms that the response to the OCD questionnaires was extraordinarily good. A 15% response to this type of questionnaire is considered normal. Over 30% responded to the questionnaires; this can possibly be attributed to the interest of respondents in the subject matter of the periodicals and the treatment of the information contained therein by the Office of Child Development.

Respondents reported using Day Care publications to a much greater extent for reference purposes and planning new centers than for assistance with on-going programs. This may reflect the current state of development of day care operations. It is reasonable to infer that new centers are in the process of being formed, and that these publications will serve as guides to these processes.

The high interest expressed by respondents in receiving Booklet 3, *Preschool* (unpublished), indicates a critical need on the part of day care centers for resource materials in this important area of operations. Day care personnel are seriously concerned about the lack of participation of parents in the day care programs. They feel that some materials/methodologies to assist in motivating parents to become concerned with day care operations are of high priority. The desire for curriculum data is centered around structured (closely graded) course materials. Since there is a large variety of useful resources in this connection, perhaps an annotated bibliography or compendium of structured curricula keyed to age groups would satisfy this need.

Many administrators were interested in more information concerning sources of funds for day care operations. The requirement for a "manual on day care," and a film on a "model center," along with the request for graphic aids appear to be good, feasible recommendations, and should be entertained as fully cost-effective to the program.

Summary

In summary, the recipients of Office of Child Development publications have a very high regard for these publications and use them extensively in planning, administering and operating day care centers. The fact that a sizeable number of respondents wish to receive not-yet-published materials reflects the reliance that day care center personnel place upon the authoritative nature of these publications. OCD publications are providing a very neces-

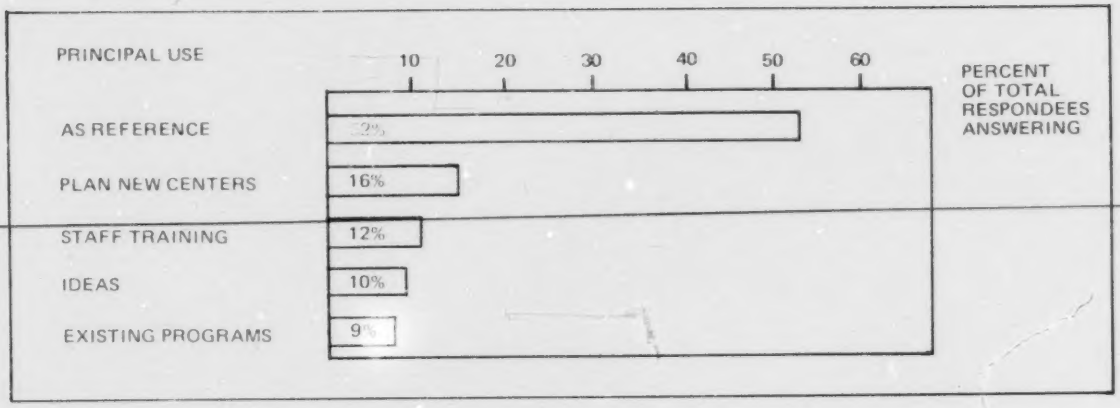

Chart 3
Use of Existing Materials

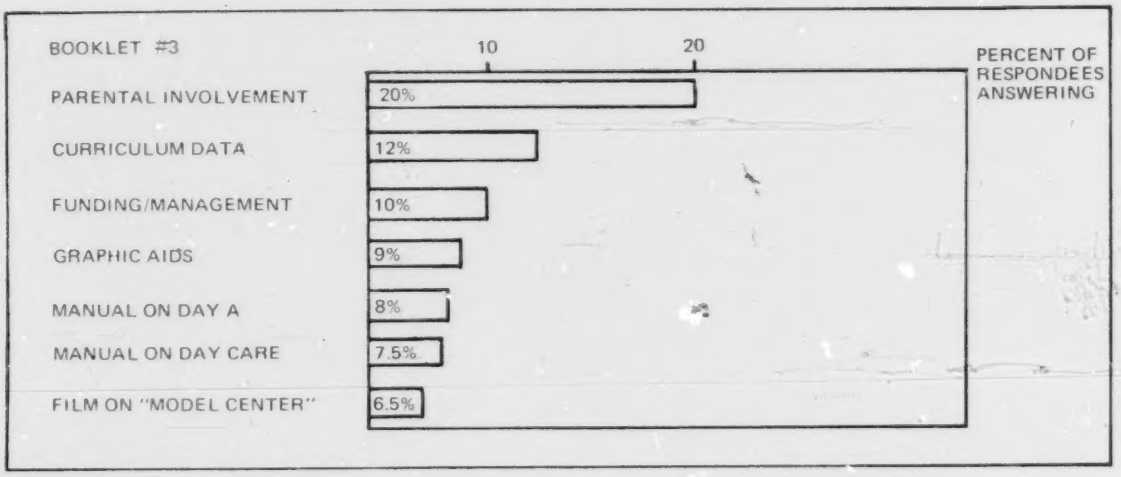

Chart 4
Additional Requirements

sary and practical function of advisory assistance to day care center operators.

The fact that 96% of the respondents "read" the publications, and many "loaned" them is most significant. Certain publications were more intensely read or considered more relevant by some disciplines. This is understandable since several publications are written for specialists. Some in-depth study should be made of the publication, "Serving School Age Children." Although scoring relatively well in any rating scheme, this publication was not as favorably received.

Conclusions

Office of Child Development efforts to assure readability of these publications have succeeded. This is confirmed by a 95% favorable response. Less than one percent felt they encountered some difficulty in reading the publications, and 4% did not answer.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT
DAY CARE PUBLICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. If you have been involved in day care during the past year, please check your role(s).

☐ Parent or consumer ☐ Center/home operator director ☐ Staff member

☐ Policy maker ☐ Other *(please specify)* _____

IF YOU WERE IN NO WAY INVOLVED IN DAY CARE, PLEASE CHECK HERE ☐ AND RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

2. If your work is related to day care, what is your job title? _____

3. For each of the Office of Child Development's publications below, please indicate whether you recall receiving a copy, approximately how much you read or scanned, and its relevance for you.

Day Care:	RECEIVED		READ OR SCANNED					RELEVANCE			
	Yes	No	All	Half or More	Almost All	Very Little	None	High	Moderate	Marginal	Not at All
A Statement of Principles	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Serving Infants	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Serving School Age Children	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Staff Training	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Health Services	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Administration	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Serving Children with Special Needs	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___

IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE ANY OF THE PUBLICATIONS, PLEASE CHECK HERE ☐ AND RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

IF YOU HAVE NOT YET READ ANY OF THE MATERIALS, PLEASE CHECK HERE ☐ AND RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

4. Would you say that the materials you read were: ☐ Easy to read or ☐ Difficult to read?

5. If you can remember any passages or sections that were really important or useful to you, please identify or describe three or four of these.

_____

_____

OMB No. 85-S73003
Expiration Date 10/30/73

ATTACHMENT 1

6. Do you recall any passages or sections that were disappointing because they didn't contain enough information? If so, please discuss.

_____

_____

7. Do you have any suggestions on how those passages might be improved? If so, please describe.

_____

_____

8. If you had occasion to refer back to any of the publications, please indicate which ones.

_____

9. If you loaned the publications to others, please indicate for each the type of person(s), e.g., parent(s), child care worker, nurse, etc.

Day Care:

A Statement of Principles _____
Serving Infants _____
Serving School Age Children _____
Staff Training _____
Health Services _____
Administration _____
Serving Children with Special Needs _____

10. In what ways would you say the materials were of most use to you? or to others? _____

_____

11. Do you have any suggestions for additional materials? or for different ways of presenting the information?

If so, please describe. _____

_____